

Washington State Chapter July, 2002

May 24-27 Oregon Outing

Friday morning started out with Jim and me for breakfast. We wondered if anyone would show up, but nope, it was just the two of us. Dawn would finish her day at school at 10am and Tim was also going to join us. A late start, but we finally got going at 10:30.

We started out on Auburn / Black Diamond road, one of my favorites because it's close in proximity and technical in nature. We continued on to Enumclaw and headed over Cayuse Pass (Chinook was still closed). We then made our way over White Pass, pulling in behind a group of HD's. They kept a decent pace, maybe a little too fast for the capability of the bikes and the riders. Once reaching the summit of White Pass, and starting on the downhill side towards Yakima, one HD rider went down and initiated the domino effect.

As the following riders were like a swarm of bees avoiding the downed bike, there was another rider whose skills were lacking in accident avoidance and parked his bike, sans kickstand. We all stopped to assist in righting the fallen scooters at which time a service truck stopped on the highway to assist as well. He stopped IN the lane and you know what's going to happen next. As we are lifting one bike, we look up just in time to see another bike miss the service truck, and run into a parked bike on the side of the road - 2 more on the ground. Was it ever going to end??? After we verified that no one was seriously hurt, and the guys started arguing about who was to blame, we decided that it was our time to get going again. The rest of the day was pretty uneventful and finished covering our 400-mile route. Needless to say, we've given that corner the moniker of "Harley Corner".

Saturday, we got an early start and headed south out of Pendleton on US-395. We made our way to Pilot Rock, then Heppner on SR-74. If we saw more than 4 cars along this 30-mile stretch, I'd be hallucinating. From there we took SR-207 south to Mitchell and ate lunch at a neat little café with excellent food and service. We worked our way back on US-26 to SR-19,

north to Kimberly, east to Monument and Long Creek, and north on 395 back to Pendleton, finishing up 300 miles this day.

Arriving back at our motel room at 6pm or so, and taking a power nap, we get a call from Brad Kuehner, another rider from Seattle on his ST. He thought we left Saturday morning, instead of Friday. (Another reason to check the schedule) The 3 of us went to dinner and talked about our rides over the last 2 days. Brad would be with us for the rest of the weekend so we set a departure time for Sunday and turned in.

Not in a big hurry to get going in the morning, we rode to Ukiah and south to Sumpter on FR-52 and 51. This was a usual route that we've done on this trip many times before. We had great sight lines, a little cold, and a good pace. Dawn and I rode together, a little behind Jim and Brad. We had lunch at our usual spot in Sumpter and then proceeded southeast on SR-7 to SR-245 and turned towards Unity.

Highway 245 was simply an over-the-hill, turn around, over-the-hill type road. We backtracked to Granite and stayed on FR-51 towards Starkey. After admiring the scenery, which reminded us of east Yellowstone, and finding a gold mine (fool's gold), we returned on west 244 to Ukiah and back to Pendleton. We encountered only spot showers up until now and we covered about 330 miles.

Monday consisted of doing essentially Friday's route in reverse for another 400-mile day. Overall, we covered 1400+ miles in 4 days, always discovering more new roads. I look forward to going back and doing it again, in late August / early September over Labor day weekend. Maybe I've whet your appetite to join us, maybe not. No crashes, and no tickets which is always a bonus, although going back to Oregon to fight those tickets can be a bonus in itself...

June 8 – Special ERC

For those that don't know, ERC stands for Experience Rider Course. I was able to pull a few strings and get Evergreen Safety Council to allow us to host our own class for our club. This worked out fantastic in that we had a great Lead Instructor in Kathy Spitz and I pulled double duty in catering and riding demonstrations for the range exercises.

The class is about 8 hours of activity; add in time for breaks and a lunch. The curriculum focuses on advanced turning, braking, and swerving – skills noticeably absent among accident involved riders (see previous discussion of "Harley Corner"). These skills were talked about in class including a discussion of traction management. We then practiced these skills on the range by performing various exercises on our own bikes. There is a knowledge test as well as a skill evaluation that are required for completion.

We had 12 of our own take this class and I'm sure that everyone learned something. It was a lot of fun for me to be able to host this event. Participants were Alan Belnap, Pamela Buckshon, Tom Callahan, Mark and Don Grabrick, Chris Harnish, Alan Heng, Dick Hitchcock, Dan Kasproicz, Tim Popovich, Suzanne St. Peter, and Bryce Ulrich.

Everyone performed great with a couple of perfect written scores and one perfect riding score. I'm sure the participants will agree that there's more to it than meets the eye.

June 15 Mt Baker by Mark Grabrick

The ride was rather excellent, with a total of 13 people showing for the day. Riders were Chris Harnish, Bob Kramer, Jim Holzberger, Tim and Heather, Suzanne and John, Alan Belnap, Alan Heng, Don Grabrick, Daryl Wilson, Trevor Norsworthy, and myself.

We started out in Tulalip heading towards Stanwood. The roads were still pretty good since the last time I rode this route 3 years ago. From Stanwood we went East towards Hwy 9 and north to Sedro-Woolley for fuel. Now I have to say that when we stopped for fuel not everyone gassed up (Alan Belnap). We continued up Hwy 9, and I guess my pace behind the Harley rider was too slow for Don to take because the next thing I know, Donald leapfrogs to the front and I'm playing follow the leader.

Don's TL-R has a sweet note if you are behind him or have him come around you. We got into the town

of Acme and had warned everyone of one particularly nasty decreasing-radius turn on Mosquito Lake Road and everyone made it through fine. By the way, Alan was still running really low on fuel at this point, but the next gas stop was only 10 miles up the road.

We traveled up Route 542 towards Mt. Baker's summit. Now is when the fun started and the twisties started making our bikes salivate. I was still leading at this time, keeping my bro in the background as much as possible. Not very much traffic this time, or any Mazda Miata rallies. Tim made his way through the pack and I waved him on to keep going. Now Don wasn't about to let Tim be out front on his own, and immediately started tracking him like an experienced deer hunter. After giving them about a 25 second lead, I started my pursuit.

I finally caught up to both of them, and not too many turns later; I was hunting my bro down, who was in the lead now. We had to avoid the little road obstacle (snow) in the oncoming lane, but overall the ride to the summit was great. Alan wanted souvenirs and grabbed some little snowballs that were pretty cool (literally). After a little break we headed down the mountain to meet up at our usual lunch destination, the Holy Smoke Grill (Harley Bar) in Sumas.

Now, I have to put that fuel thing back into the equation, because as most of us fueled up in Kendall, not everyone got gas, Tim. We had to make an abrupt stop in Stanwood while most of the group stayed on the highway to continue home. I'm not going to be too hard on these guys, but I got ribbed for over two years for only stopping at one gas station so this is my opportunity to get even. So those of you that don't fuel when everyone else does, beware, cause I'm going to tease the snot out of you if the whole group has to stop and watch you fuel your bike by yourself. MG

June 21-23 Lolo Pass, Idaho

Hearing the words Lolo Pass should make you get giddy with excitement, if you've ever been there. As a motorcyclist, there are few sweeter roads than this in the Pacific Northwest. Sure it takes 400 miles to get there, and you probably want to be rested prior to riding Lolo Pass, but I can't think of a better way to spend a 3-day weekend, except maybe Oregon, Northern California, Canadian Rockies, etc...

Jim H, Cary P, Don G, Dawn and myself were about to make the trek. Alan Belnap was scheduled to join us, but after waiting until 8:45, and no call, we rolled without him. Apparently, he went to the wrong place to meet us and then tried to catch us on SR-410.

We had actually gone US-12, but Alan didn't know that. Unfortunately in his haste to catch us, met a park ranger who issued him a green award for his efforts. Citation in hand, and feeling that that was "a sign", Alan returned home only to get our call that night telling him what a great ride we had to Lewiston, Idaho. I'm sure he had a few choice words for us after I hung up the phone.

Actually, we had stop-and-go construction all the way to Packwood on US-12. We also saw a couple of "inflated" elk on the side of the road, which provided a good reminder of road fodder. From Yakima, we caught SR-24 through Moxee where we had lunch (Jerk Mayo) and spoke with a few municipal workers (Deputies from Yakima county headed out to round up some cattle). From there we continued east on 24, through Hanford slowing down for one patrol car, and then to Othello for gas. There we caught SR-260 and SR-261 to Lyons Ferry state park and then Starbuck. This is a roller-coaster road with 25mph blind corners following elevation changes (visualize highway 36 west of I-5 in California). Back on US-12, we cruised to Lewiston for the night.

Saturday, Lolo Pass was the mission, and we chose to accept it! The day started off with a great breakfast at the Comfort Inn. They had a great selection, including a setup to make your own waffles. We have stayed here in the past and it is well worth the money.

Intending on taking US-12 all the way to Lolo, we made one wrong turn off the highway, next thing you know, we were heading south on US-95 towards Grangeville. About 20 miles after that turn, I catch up to Jim and signal to pull over. Jim gives me the thumbs-up and motions to continue forward. I assumed he knew something that I didn't we all pressed on. Another 20 miles later, he turns onto a side road, and I think this must be where we go to get back to US-12. He stops and says, "Does anyone know where the heck we're at?" I laughed and realized that we were indeed going the wrong way. This small error quickly became an unexpected bonus in catching SR-13 (a must do if you're in the area) to get back on track. Fueling in Kooskia, we were now on our way. Lolo Pass consists of 131 miles of phenomenal high-speed twistiness.

About 15 miles out of town, we saw one ISP trooper with a speed-monitoring trailer (the one that shows your speed in BIG numbers) parked on the side of the road. This was about the only section of this highway that is straight enough to get a radar reading on anyone. We slowed for him, turned the corner, and quickly left the scene. Initially, I considered doing a fly-by on the trailer, but saw that a truck with a light bar

was parked off to the side. I quickly reconsidered my actions. The rest of the 100+ miles were flawless.

We had lunch in Lolo and met another sport biker on a ZX-9R. He was hot and saw our bikes at the saloon and thought he'd pop in, have a beer (he had a beer, we didn't), and talk to us. To our amazement, we didn't see many bikes, and no "sport" bikes at all (except for the aforesaid one). He joined us part way back and then pulled off, probably to recycle the beer.

We rode back to Kooskia at roughly the same pace, gassed, and this time, stayed on US-12 to Lewiston. While we were gassing, a local enforcement officer pulled in to gas his pickup and at that moment, a loud HD rolled through town. We pointed at him and said that he should go take care of him for "disturbing the peace". He laughed and said, "You want me to chase him down in my Yota?" We offered to pursue him on our bikes (gives us a reason to ride fast), but the cop just laughed us off.

Once back on the road, we made good time and on a couple of occasions, while passing other slower moving vehicles (basically everyone else), we got held up in traffic just as an oncoming red & blue rolled by. The timing was perfect. Back in Lewiston, I looked at my tire wear, and expected to see nothing left on the front. I was shocked to see that the BT010 held up fantastically and even produced rubber boogers on the sidewalls. I would never have expected the tire to do so well. For dinner, we had enough Chinese food to feed an army, or at least Mark Grabrick ;-)

Sunday, we wanted to get an early start to beat the impending wet-weather pattern that would require us to don the raingear. We rolled early towards Pullman and then wanted to go west, fast! We took SR-193 out of Lewiston, expecting to get in some good twisties, prior to the freeway drone. On two separate occasions we had to make a poorly marked 90-degree turn to stay on the correct road. It turns out that we missed the second one and rode on 3+ miles of gravel before returning to the pavement. The corner we missed was marked at 25mph, but was able to be ridden well above that. Rolling on through the corner, no one expected to see a sign that read "Pavement Ends" at 50ft beyond the exit of the turn, and we were all directed onto a gravel road by mistake. I witnessed Dawn making the save of the weekend, keeping her bike upright.

After that pucker-factor 10.0 experience, we worked our way to SR-26 and headed west to Vantage. We did finally catch rain, and had made it through by the time we got to Othello. Don tested the limits of his

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gas reserve and lost that battle about 8 miles from Vantage so Cary made the solo trip to get more juice for his bike. We all eventually gathered in Vantage for lunch, which turned out to be the final stop of the day. We all jumped on I-90 and battled traffic the rest of the way home.

The ride turned out to be about 1300 miles for 3 days. The 460 miles we rode on Saturday was some of the hardest riding I've ever done on my bike and I got to experience the advantages of having an aftermarket exhaust system for the first time. ROLL-ON! Torque down low in the usable range is invaluable when making a pass. It's club rides like this one that make me fall in love with my bike and traveling by bike all over again. I also appreciate having good people around me to ride with. That, to me, is what club riding is all about.

For your viewing pleasure...

<http://www.congsoft.com/arai.wmv>

Events At-A-Glance

July							August						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31

July 13 – Ride to **Mt. St. Helens**

Meet at Safeway (Enumclaw) - 8 am Ride

July 20 - Ride to **Neah Bay**

Meet at Kingston Inn - 8 am Breakfast

July 27-28 – Ride along the **Columbia River**

Contact: Tim Popovich (253) 661-8345

August 1-4 – Ride **Vancouver Island (Tofino, BC)**

Contact: Bryan Bailey (425) 204-6080

August 10 – Ride to **Winthrop** - 8 am Ride

Meet at the I-5 Truck scales, just north of exit 186

August 16-18 - **Oregon Camp-Out** (Cascade Lcks, OR)

Contact: Dan Hytry (206) 612-2821

August 24 - **Three Pass** (Chinook / Cayuse / White)

Meet at Safeway (Enumclaw) - 8 am Ride

August 30-Sept 2 - **Oregon Outing** (Pendleton, Oregon)

Contact: Dan Hytry (206) 612-2821

www.geocities.com/MotorCity/Garage/4714/